

To whom it may concern:

Dear committee members,

We are writing to you today with some of our concerns regarding the problems of getting help for drug addiction, especially the opiates.

My name is Joseph Dunn and my wife's name is Laurie and in the mists of the horrific, nightmare journey of heroin addiction that hit our beautiful twenty one year old son, Ryan. We were completely lost, confused and had given up almost all hope and sanity, our lives were a mess.

Then came the day our son, lying in bed with death at his door, begged for help. It was at this point the reality of the system rocked our world. Ryan was trying to stop using on his own so his body was detoxing. Knowing his urine might be clean my wife was forced with the ugly truth and her worst nightmare, she had to give money to our son to buy heroin, knowing that he would be at a high risk for an overdose because his urine had to be "dirty" to get help, you can only imagine how heavy our hearts became but then came the ultimate punch in the gut. Our son, with heroin in his system, and my wife, at one of the lowest points of her life, went to Bristol Hospital. After hours of testing and questions..... they were told he could not receive help because our insurance concluded that he did not meet their criteria. What? we could not believe they would not help a child who was a shell of himself, mentally and physically, and looked as if he was going to die. We need to change this so many children are dying from this disease. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Joseph M Dunn
Laurie Dunn